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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCS-06
CA-01 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 AID-05 PC-01
ICAE-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 ARA-10 /110 W
----------073537 212043Z /63
O 211850Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9874
INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINSHASA 5125

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, CG, MILI
SUBJECT: SHABA ATTACK: DEBRIEFING OF MR. AND MRS. HAROLD AMSTUTZ,
AMCIT EVACUEES FROM KOLWEZI

BEGIN SUMMARY: EMBOFFS DEBRIEFED KOLWEZI EVACUEES MR. AND
MRS. HAROLD
AMSTUTZ ON THE EVENING OF MAY 20. MR. AMSTUTZ SAID THAT BEING AN EX-
MARINE HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE SOUND AND USE OF WEAPONS. THE
AMSTUTZES' HOUSE WAS LOCATED CLOSE TO A MAJOR TRAFFIC INTERSECTION
JUST
SOUTH OF CITE FORREST AND ONLY A FEW BUILDINGS AWAY FROM AN AREA
WHICH THE REBELS APPARENTLY USED A A MAJOR MILITARY DEPOT/STAGING
POINT.

THE MAJOR POINTS OF INTEREST DEVELOPED DURING THE DEBRIEFING WERE THE

FOLLOWING: END SUMMARY.

1. THE AMSTUTZ WOKE UP AT 0600 SATURDAY, MAY 13 TO THE SOUND OF
AUTOMATIC WEAPONS BEING FIRED A BLOCK AWAY FROM THEIR HOME. THEN
FIRING BROKE OUT ALL OVER TOWN WHICH MADE AMSTUTZES BELIEVE THAT
THE TAKEOVER OF KOLWEZI HAD BEEN CAREFULLY PRE-ARRANGED. MR. AMSTUTZ
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,
A MISSIONARY PILOT, HAD BEEN TRAVELING IN AND AROUND THE CITY ON
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, MAY 11 AND 12, AND HAD SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF
ANYTHING UNUSUAL.

2. WITH ONE IMPORTANT EXCEPTION, THE ONLY SOLDIEES SEEN BY THE
AMSTUTZES WORE UNIFORMS WHICH LOOKED LIKE NORMAL FAZ ATTIRE. AT

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APPROXIMATELY 11 AM ON THE FIRST DAY OF FIGHTING, MAY 13, A GROUP OF 70-100 SOLDIERS MOVED DOWN THE ROAD IN FRONT OF THE AMSTUTZES' HOUSE. THEY WORE LIGHT BROWN UNIFORMS, WHICH RESEMBLED AMERICAN KHAKIS MORE THAN NORMAL FAZ UNIFORMS. THEIR HEADGEAR WAS ALSO DISTINCTIVE, LOOKING LIKE A U.S. CIVIL WAR KEPI. THESE TROOPS CARRIED BACKPACKS AND WEAPONS. OTHER THAN THEIR ATTIRE, THERE WAS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT THEM. THEY LOOKED LIKE ZAIRIANS AND DID NOT APPEAR TO BE WORN OUT OR UNKEMPT AS IF THEY HAD BEEN MARCHING FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.

3. MR. AMSTUTZ SAID A GREAT AMOUNT OF SHOOTING WENT ON DURING THE WEEK-LONG BATTLE. HE COULD NOT IMAGINE WHERE ALL THE AMMUNI-TION HAD COME FROM. THE REBELS HAD THE HABIT OF SIGNALING TO ONE ANOTHER WITH BURSTS OF AUTOMATIC WEAPON FIRE. ONE COMMON SIGNAL CONSISTED OF TWO SINGLE SHOTS FOLLOWED BY THREE SHOTS IN VERY QUICK SUCCESSION. THIS SIGNAL WOULD THEN BE REPEATED AT ANOTHER POSITION, AND THEN AT ANOTHER, AND SO ON ACROSS TOWN. MR. AMSTUTZ HEARD RIFLE FIRE, MACHINE GUN FIRE, FIRE FROM SOMETHING WHICH APPEARED
TO BE A VERY HEAVY MACHINE GUN OR AUTOMATIC WEAPON, MORTAR FIRE, HAND GRENADES GOING OFF, AND PERHAPS SOME FIRING FROM CANNON.

4. AMSTUTZ DESCRIBED A PARTICULARLY FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE. HE HAD RESPONDED TO A RADIO MESSAGE FROM LUBUMBASHI BY CLICKING HIS MICROPHONE TO SHOW THAT HE WAS STILL ALIVE. IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS RESPONSE, A ZAIRIAN IN CIVILIAN ATTIRE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE SOL-
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DIERS DROVE UP AND BEGAN SHOOTING AT A HOUSE TWO DOORS AWAY. THEY SHOUTED "MISSIONAIRE." (COMMENT: THE AMSTUTZ KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH IS SKETCHY, THE WORD MAY HAVE BEEN "MERCENARIES"). MR. AMSTUTZ WAS CONVINCED THAT THEY HAD LOCATED HIM BY A RADIO DIRECTION FINDER BUT THAT THE REBELS' READING WAS JUST ENOUGH OFF TO SAVE THEIR LIVES. THE NEXT MORNING WHEN AMSTUTZ WAS ONCE AGAIN TO BE CALLED FROM LUBUMBASHI BY RADIO, SOLDIERS WITH WHAT APPEARED TO BE DIRECTION FINDERS WERE PLACED AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS NEAR HIS HOUSE. THESE SOLDIERS WERE AGAIN DRESSED LIKE FAZ SOLDIERS. THIS WAS THE ONLY INDICATION HE HAD OF THE REBELS' USING SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9875
INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE

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5. AT NO TIME DID THE AMSTUTZES SEE ANY IDENTIFIABLE CUBAN TROOPS OR ANY SOLDIERS WHO APPEARED TO BE OF OTHER THAN ZAIRIAN NATIONALITY. ON CERTAIN OCCASIONS THEY HEARD SOLDIERS SHOUTING TO EACH OTHER IN SWAHILI.

6. THE CLOSEST THE AMSTUTZES HAD WITH THE SOLDIERS BEGAN ON MAY 13. AT APPROXIMATELY 1030 THAT MORNING FIVE SOLDIERS IN FAZ UNIFORMS ACCOMPANIED BY ONE OFFICER AND 18 ZAIRIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN INSISTED ON ENTERING THEIR HOME. THESE INDIVIDUALS INDICATED THEY HAD BEEN LIVING NEXT DOOR, A FORMER SNEL GUEST HOUSE WHICH HAD BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE ZAIRIAN MILITARY. THE SOLDIERS INDICATED CONSIDERABLE ANXIETY ABOUT THE 75-100 UN-USUALLY-DRESSED SOLDIERS MENTIONED IN PARA TWO ABOVE AND SPOKE OF THEM AS THE ENEMY. THE FIVE SOLDIERS AND THEIR OFFICER QUICKLY SHED THEIR UNIFORMS AND APPEARED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES. THE AMSTUTZES DO NOT KNOW WHERE THEIR CIVILIAN CLOTHES CAME FROM. THE SOLDIERS HID THEIR UNIFORMS AND WEAPONS. HOWEVER, THE AMSTUTZES LATER CAME ACROSS THE OFFICER'S UNIFORM AND HIS WEAPON WHICH WERE POORLY HIDDEN IN THEIR HOUSE, PERHAPS DELIBERATELY SO. MR. AMSTUTZ DISCOVERED THAT THE OFFICER HAD LEFT ANGOLAN CURRENCY IN THE POCKET OF HIS UNIFORM. A ZAIRIAN COLLEAGUE OF THE AMSTUTZES WHO CAME TO SEE IF THEY WERE SAFE AND SOUND, CONVINCED THE ZAIRIAN REFUGEES IN THE AMSTUTZES HOUSE THAT ZAIRIANS IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES WITH PROPER CONFIDENTIAL

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IDENTIFICATION WERE NOT BEING MOLESTED. THE OFFICER, WHO HAD CALLED HIMSELF A GENERAL, ASKED MR. AMSTUTZ TO GIVE HIM A PIECE OF PAPER SAYING THAT HE WAS THE AMSTUTZES' SERVANT. MR. AMSTUTZ DID SO. THE SO-CALLED GENERAL HAD SPELLED OUT THE NAME TO BE USED ON THE DOCU-MENT: IT WAS "KAMBALA," ALL OF THE ZAIRIANS LEFT THE AMSTUTZ HOUSE THE MORNING OF MAY 15.

7. THE AMSTUTZES SPEND A GOOD DEAL OF TIME DESCRIBING AN OCCURENCE WHICH THEY CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT BUT INEXPLICABLE. ON FRIDAY MORNING, MAY 19, THEY SAW A EUROPEAN DRESSED IN A WHITE T-SHIRT,

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WHITE SHORTS, WHITE SOCKS AND BLACK SHOES WHO MOVED IN AND OUT OF THEIR YARD AND THE YEARDS NEXT TO THEM IN A PURPOSEFUL FASHION. HE CUT HOLES THROUGH THE FENCE AND WENT TO THE AREA NEARBY WHICH THE AMSTUTZES WERE CONVINCED WAS A MAJOR REBEL DEPOT/STAGING POINT. THE EUROPEAN APPEARED TO BE FRENCH. HE SEEMED TO BE IN HIS EARLY 30'S, WAS EXTREMELY MUSCULAR, AND JUMPED OVER ONCE FENCE AS IF HE HAD RECIEVED MILITARY TRAINING. THEY THEORIZED THAT HE WAS AN ADVANCE SCOUT FOR THE FRENCH PARACHUTISTS, BUT HIS ACTIONS DID NOT SUBSTANTIATE THAT THEORY. HE FINALLY DISAPPEARED WITHOUT THEIR EVER BEING ABLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER HE BELONGED TO THE GOVERNMENT OR THE REBEL SIDE.

8. SHORTLY BEFORE THE FRENCH PARATROOPS ARRIVED, THE AMSTUTZ' HEARD THE SOUND OF MANY VEHICLES MOVING ALONG THE MAIN ROAD NEAR THEIR HOUSE. THESE VEHILCES WENT BACK AND FORTH AND DID NOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF FORMING A CONVOY LEAVING THE CITY. TO THE CONTRARY, THEIR IMPRESSION WAS THAT REBEL TROOPS WERE PERHAPS BEING -REGROUPED TOWARDS THE CENTER OF TOWN. THE AMSTUTZES' DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY REBEL MOTORIZED COLUMN ESCAPED BY PASSING THROUGH THE MAIN INTERSECTION NEAR THEIR HOME.
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